
BUFFERS & SCREENING REQUIREMENTS

In order to reduce the impact of a use of land on adjacent uses which are of a significantly different character, density or intensity, buffers and screening is required.

A **buffer** consists of a horizontal distance from a lot line which may only be occupied by screening, underground utilities, retention areas and landscaping materials.

Screening shall be required along the property boundaries of the zoning lot with the exception that screening such as hedges, fences or walls, not be over four (4) feet tall within the front yard(s).

Within buffers ten (10) feet or less in required width, partial screening is required and shall consist of at least one of the following:

- , A row of street trees planted in accordance with the Manual of City Specifications. (This manual can be purchased through the City of Newton Planning Department).
- , A masonry wall located within the required buffer. This wall must be a minimum height of six (6) feet (above finished grade) and if a block wall, it must be painted on all sides.
- , A solid wooden fence six (6) feet in height.

, A berm and planting combination, with the berm an average height of three (3) feet and dense plantings which will, when combined with the berm, achieve a minimum height of six (6) feet and seventy-five (75) percent opacity in two (2) years.

, Lawn, low-growing evergreen shrubs, evergreen ground cover, or rock or wood mulch covering the balance of the buffer.

Within required buffers of between ten and one-tenth (10.1) feet and fifteen (15) feet in width, screening is required and must consist of **one of the following, together** with any additional specification of the City Manual of City Specifications.

- , The choice of screening required for a ten (10) foot buffer and one of the following:
- , A row of evergreen shrubs planted not more than five (5) feet apart to form a continuous hedge, at least six (6) feet high, **or** a berm and planting combination, with the berm having an average height of three (3) feet, and dense evergreen shrubs which, when combined with the berm, achieve a height of six (6) feet of continuous hedge within two (2) years of installation.

Within required buffers more than fifteen (15) feet in width, screening is required and must consist of **at least one of the following, together** with any additional specifications of the City Manual of City Specifications:

- , The choice of screening required for a ten (10) foot buffer and one of the following:
- , A double row of evergreen trees which are not less than ten (10) feet high at time of installation, planted no more than ten (10) feet apart, **and**
- , Lawn, low-growing evergreen ground cover, **or** rock **or** wood mulch covering the balance of the buffer.
- , **Alternative buffers and screening.** In lieu of compliance with the above buffer and screening requirements, an applicant may submit to the Planning Director for his review and approval, a detailed plan and specifications for landscaping and screening. The Planning Director **may** approve the alternative buffering and screening in writing, upon finding that the proposal will afford a degree of buffering and screening, in terms of height, opacity and separation, equivalent to or exceeding that provided by above requirements.

Existing vegetation. The retention of existing vegetation shall be maximized to the extent practicable, where ever such vegetation contributes to required buffering and screening or the preservation of significant trees. Exotic, nuisance trees, listed in the Manual of City Specifications, are not considered significant trees and their removal is encouraged. Where tree replacement is necessary or desired, the selection of significant trees to replace those removed is recommended.

Maintenance and irrigation of landscaping. All landscaping and screening which provides required buffering and screening shall be maintained so as to continue their effectiveness.

Central solid waste storage area. All new building and uses, except for single-family and two-family dwellings, must provide facilities for the central storage of solid waste within the lots. Where such facilities are provided outside the building, they shall be screened from adjacent property by an enclosure constructed of materials compatible with the materials of the building.

Screening of mechanical equipment. All non-residential uses except those permitted in the M-1 and EM-1 Districts shall screen from view of public places and neighboring properties all mechanical equipment, such as, but not limited to, ground or roof-mounted air conditioners, air conditioners, or heat pumps, through the use of features such as berms, fences, false facades, or dense landscaping.

Screening of open storage. Open storage must be screened from view of any street, and from all residentially zoned land by a row of evergreen shrubs or trees planted to form a continuous hedge at least six (6) feet high within two (2) years of installation.

This is general information regarding Buffering and Screening. For more detailed information, contact the City of Newton Planning Department for a copy of the City of Newton Zoning Ordinance.

The City of Newton manual of Specifications for Buffers and Screening can be purchased through the City of Newton Planning Department.

CITY OF NEWTON PLANNING DEPARTMENT



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